

Vespers as a Reader's Service

The Meeting of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in the Temple

For use on Monday evening, February 1, 2021

Reader: Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us. Amen.

Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee!

O Heavenly King, Comforter, Spirit of Truth, Who art everywhere present and fillest all things, Treasury of good things, and Giver of life: come and abide in us, and cleanse us from every impurity, and save our souls, O Good One!

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. *(x3)*

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

O Most-Holy Trinity, have mercy on us; O Lord, blot out our sins; O Master, pardon our iniquities; O Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for Thy Name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. *(x3)*

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Our Father, Who art in the heavens, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. *(x12)*

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

O come let us worship God our King.

O come let us worship and fall down before Christ our King and God.

O come let us worship and fall down before Christ Himself, our King and God.

Psalm 103

Reader: Bless the Lord, O my soul; O Lord my God, Thou hast been magnified exceedingly. Confession and majesty hast Thou put on, Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment, Who stretchest out the heaven as it were a curtain; Who supporteth His chambers in the waters, Who appointeth the clouds for His ascent, Who walketh upon the wings of the winds, Who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire, Who establisheth the earth in the sureness thereof; it shall not be turned back for ever and ever.

The abyss like a garment is His mantle; upon the mountains shall the waters stand. At Thy rebuke they will flee, at the voice of Thy thunder shall they be afraid. The mountains rise up and the plains sink down, unto the place where Thou hast established them. Thou appointedst a bound that they shall not pass, neither return to cover the earth.

He sendeth forth springs in the valleys; between the mountains will the waters run. They shall give drink to all the beasts of the field; the wild asses will wait to quench their thirst. Beside them will the birds of the heaven lodge, from the midst of the rocks will they give voice.

He watereth the mountains from His chambers; the earth shall be satisfied with the fruit of Thy works. He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and green herb for the service of men, To bring forth bread out of the earth; and wine maketh glad the heart of man. To make his face cheerful with oil; and bread strengtheneth man's heart. The trees of the plain shall be satisfied, the cedars of Lebanon, which Thou hast planted. There will the sparrows make their nests; the house of the heron is chief among them. The high mountains are a refuge for the harts, and so is the rock for the hares.

He hath made the moon for seasons; the sun knoweth his going down. Thou appointedst the darkness, and there was the night, wherein all the beasts of the forest will go abroad. Young lions roaring after their prey, and seeking their food from God. The sun ariseth, and they are gathered together, and they lay them down in their dens. But man shall go forth unto his work, and to his labor until the evening.

How magnified are Thy works, O Lord! In wisdom hast Thou made them all; the earth is filled with Thy creation. So is this great and spacious sea, therein are things creeping innumerable, small living creatures with the great. There go the ships; there this dragon, whom Thou hast made to play therein.

All things wait on Thee, to give them their food in due season; when Thou givest it them, they will gather it. When Thou openest Thy hand, all things shall be filled with goodness; when Thou turnest away Thy face, they shall be troubled. Thou wilt take their spirit, and they shall cease; and unto their dust shall they return. Thou wilt send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created; and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth.

Let the glory of the Lord be unto the ages; the Lord will rejoice in His works. Who looketh on the earth and maketh it tremble, Who toucheth the mountains and they smoke. I will sing unto the Lord throughout my life, I will chant to my God for as long as I have my being. May my words be sweet unto Him, and I will rejoice in the Lord. O that sinners would cease from the earth, and they that work iniquity, that they should be no more. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

The sun knoweth his going down, Thou appointedst the darkness, and there was the night. How magnified are Thy works, O Lord! In wisdom hast Thou made them all.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Glory to Thee, O God. *(x3)*

Lord, have mercy. *(x12)*

Blessed Is The Man

People: Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice in Him with trembling!

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Blessed are all who take refuge in Him!

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Arise, O Lord! Save me, O my God!

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Salvation belongs to the Lord! Thy blessing be upon Thy people!

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Glory to Thee, O God. (**x3**)

Reader: Lord, have mercy. (**x3**)

Lord, I Call (Tone 1)

People: Lord, I call upon Thee, hear me! Hear me, O Lord! Lord, I call upon Thee, hear me! Receive the voice of my prayer when I call upon Thee. Hear me, O Lord! Let my prayer arise in Thy sight as incense, and let the lifting up of my hands be an evening sacrifice. Hear me, O Lord!

Reader: Set, O Lord, a watch before my mouth, and a door of enclosure round about my lips. Incline not my heart unto words of evil, to make excuse with excuses in sins. With men that work iniquity; and I will not join with their chosen. The righteous man will chasten me with mercy and reprove me; as for the oil of the sinner, let it not anoint my head. For yet more is my prayer in the presence of their pleasures; swallowed up near by the rock have their judges been. They shall hear my words, for they be sweetened; as a clod of earth is broken upon the earth, so have their bones been scattered nigh unto hades. For unto Thee, O Lord, O Lord, are mine eyes, in Thee have I hoped; take not my soul away. Keep me from the snare which they have laid for me, and from the stumbling-blocks of them that work iniquity. The sinners shall fall into their own net; I am alone until I pass by. With my voice unto the Lord have I cried, with my voice unto the Lord have I made supplication. I will pour out before Him my supplication, mine affliction before Him will I declare. When my spirit was fainting within me, then Thou knewest my paths. In this way wherein I have walked they hid for me a snare. I looked upon my right hand, and beheld, and there was none that did know me. Flight hath failed me, and there is none that watcheth out for my soul. I have cried unto Thee, O Lord; I said: Thou art my hope, my portion art Thou in the land of the living. Attend unto my supplication, for I am brought very low. Deliver me from them that persecute me, for they are stronger than I.

Bring my soul out of prison that I may confess Thy name.

The righteous shall wait patiently for me until Thou shalt reward me.

Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord; O Lord, hear my voice.

Tone 1 (for the Feast)

People: Simeon, tell us, Whom dost thou bear in thine arms, that thou dost rejoice so greatly in the Temple? To Whom dost thou shout and cry aloud: "Now am I set free, for I have seen my Savior?" This is He Who was born of a Virgin; this is God the Word, Who came forth from God, Who for our sakes has taken flesh and has saved man. Let us worship Him!

Reader: Let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.

People: Simeon, tell us, Whom dost thou bear in thine arms, that thou dost rejoice so greatly in the Temple? To Whom dost thou shout and cry aloud: "Now am I set free, for I have seen my Savior?" This is He Who was born of a Virgin; this is God the Word, Who came forth from God, Who for our sakes has taken flesh and has saved man. Let us worship Him!

Reader: If Thou shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, O Lord, who shall stand? For with Thee there is forgiveness.

People: Simeon, tell us, Whom dost thou bear in thine arms, that thou dost rejoice so greatly in the Temple? To Whom dost thou shout and cry aloud: "Now am I set free, for I have seen my Savior?" This is He Who was born of a Virgin; this is God the Word, Who came forth from God, Who for our sakes has taken flesh and has saved man. Let us worship Him!

Reader: For Thy name's sake have I patiently waited for Thee, O Lord; my soul hath waited patiently for Thy word, my soul hath hoped in the Lord.

People: Simeon, receive Him Whom Moses once beheld in darkness, granting the Law on Sinai, now that He has become a Babe subject to the Law! This is He Who spoke through the Law. This is He, of Whom the Prophets spoke, Who for our sakes has taken flesh and has saved man. Let us worship Him!

Reader: From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch let Israel hope in the Lord.

People: Simeon, receive Him Whom Moses once beheld in darkness, granting the Law on Sinai, now that He has become a Babe subject to the Law! This is He Who spoke through the Law. This is He, of Whom the Prophets spoke, Who for our sakes has taken flesh and has saved man. Let us worship Him!

Reader: For with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption; and He shall redeem Israel out of all his iniquities.

People: Simeon, receive Him Whom Moses once beheld in darkness, granting the Law on Sinai, now that He has become a Babe subject to the Law! This is He Who spoke through the Law. This is He, of Whom the Prophets spoke, Who for our sakes has taken flesh and has saved man. Let us worship Him!

Reader: O praise the Lord, all ye nations; praise Him, all ye peoples.

People: Come, let us also go to meet Christ with divine songs! Let us receive Him Whose salvation Simeon saw! This is He Whom David announced; this is He Who spoke in the Prophets, Who, for our sakes, has taken flesh and Who speaks through the Law. Let us worship Him!

Reader: For He hath made His mercy to prevail over us, and the truth of the Lord abideth for ever.

People: Come, let us also go to meet Christ with divine songs! Let us receive Him Whose salvation Simeon saw! This is He Whom David announced; this is He Who spoke in the Prophets, Who, for our sakes, has taken flesh and Who speaks through the Law. Let us worship Him!

Reader: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Tone 6 (for the Feast)

People: Let the gate of heaven be opened today, for the unoriginate Word of the Father has made a beginning in time without forsaking His divinity. As a Babe forty days old, of His own will He is brought by the Virgin, His Mother, as an offering in the Temple of the Law. The Elder receives Him in his arms, crying as a servant to his Master: "Let me depart, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation!" Glory to Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast come into the world to save mankind!

O Gladsome Light

People: O Gladsome Light of the holy glory of the immortal Father, heavenly, holy, blessed Jesus Christ! Now that we have come to the setting of the sun, and behold the light of evening, we praise God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. For meet it is at all times to worship Thee with voices of praise, O Son of God, and Giver of life! Therefore, all the world doth glorify Thee!

Prokeimenon

Reader: The prokeimenon in the sixth tone:

The Lord is King, He is robed in majesty!

People: The Lord is King, He is robed in majesty!

Reader: The Lord is robed with strength and hath girt Himself.

People: The Lord is King, He is robed in majesty!

Reader: For He hath made the world so sure that it shall not be moved.

People: The Lord is King, He is robed in majesty!

Reader: Holiness becometh Thy house, O Lord, unto length of days.

People: The Lord is King, He is robed in majesty!

Reader: The Lord is King

People: He is robed in majesty!

Readings

Reader: The Reading from Exodus.

[Composite 6: from Exodus 12,13; Numbers 8; Leviticus 12]

And it came to pass, in that day that the Lord brought out the children of Israel from the land of Egypt with their forces, that the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, Sanctify to me every first-born, first produced, opening every womb among the children of Israel both of man and beast: it is Mine.

And Moses said to the people, Remember this day, in which ye came forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, for with a strong hand the Lord brought you forth thence; and you shall keep His law. And it shall come to pass when the Lord thy God shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, as he sware to thy fathers, that thou shalt set apart every offspring opening the womb, the males to the Lord.

And if thy son should ask thee hereafter, saying, What is this? then thou shalt say to him, With a strong hand the Lord brought us out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. And when Pharaoh hardened his heart so as not to send us away, he slew every first-born in the land of Egypt, both the first-born of man and the first-born of beast; therefore do I sacrifice every offspring that opens the womb, the males to the Lord, and every first-born of my sons I will redeem.

And it shall be for a sign, immovable before thine eyes. For thus saith the Lord God Almighty: The first-born of thy sons thou shalt give to me. Whatsoever woman shall have conceived and born a male child, on the eighth day she shall circumcise the flesh of his foreskin. And for thirty-three days she shall not enter the sanctuary of God to the priest, until the days of her purification be fulfilled. And after this, she shall bring a lamb of a year old without blemish for a whole-burnt-offering, and a young pigeon or turtle-dove, to the door of the tabernacle of witness, to the priest. Or, instead of these she shall bring before the Lord two turtle-doves or two young pigeons, and the priest shall pray for her.

For these are given to Me as a recompense out of the midst of the children of Israel: I have taken them and consecrated them to myself instead of all the first-born of the Egyptians, in the day in which I smote every first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and cattle. Thus saith God Most High, the Holy One of Israel.

Reader: The Reading from the Prophecy of Isaiah.

[Isaiah 6:1-12]

And it came to pass in the year in which king Uzziah died, that I saw the Lord sitting on a high and exalted throne, and the house was full of his glory. And seraphs stood round about him: each one had six wings: and with two they covered their face, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. And one cried to the other, and they said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

And the lintel shook at the voice they uttered, and the house was filled with smoke. And I said, Woe is me, for I am pricked to the heart; for being a man, and having unclean lips, I dwell in the midst of a people having unclean lips; and I have seen with mine eyes the King, the Lord of hosts.

And there was sent to me one of the seraphs, and he had in his hand a coal, which he had taken off the altar with the tongs: and he touched my mouth, and said, Behold, this has touched thy lips, and will take away thine iniquities, and will purge off thy sins. And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go to this people? And I said, Behold, I am here, send me.

And he said, Go, and say to this people, Ye shall hear indeed, but ye shall not understand; and ye shall see indeed, but ye shall not perceive. For the heart of this people has become gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

And I said, How long, O Lord? And he said, Until the cities be deserted by reason of their not being inhabited, and the houses by reason of there being no men, and the land shall be left desolate. And after this God shall remove the men far off, and they that are left upon the land shall be multiplied.

Reader: The Reading from the Prophecy of Isaiah.

[Composite 7: from Isaiah 19]

Behold, the Lord sits on a swift cloud, and shall come to Egypt: and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence, and their heart shall faint within them. And the spirit of the Egyptians shall be troubled within them; and I will frustrate their counsel: And I will deliver Egypt into the hands of cruel lords; thus saith the Lord of hosts.

And the Egyptians shall drink the water that is by the sea, but the river shall fail, and be dried up. Thus saith the Lord: Where are now thy wise men? and let them declare to thee, and say, What has the Lord of hosts purposed upon Egypt? In that day the Egyptians shall be as women, in fear and in trembling because of the hand of the Lord of hosts, which he shall bring upon them.

And there shall be an altar to the Lord in the land of the Egyptians, and a pillar to the Lord by its border. And it shall be for a sign to the Lord for ever in the land of Egypt: for they shall presently cry to the Lord, and he shall send them a man who shall save them. And the Lord shall be known to the Egyptians, and the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day; and they shall offer sacrifices, and shall vow vows to the Lord, and pay them.

Reader: Lord, have mercy. (*x12*)

Vouchsafe, O Lord

Reader: Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this evening without sin. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our Fathers, and praised and glorified is Thy name unto the ages. Amen. Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we have hoped in Thee. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy statutes. Blessed art Thou, O Master, grant me understanding of Thy statutes. Blessed art Thou, O Holy One, enlighten me by Thy statutes. O Lord, Thy mercy endureth for ever; disdain not the works of Thy hands. Unto Thee is due praise, unto Thee is due song, unto Thee glory is due, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (*x3*)

Aposticha

Tone 7 (for the Feast)

- People:** Adorn thy bridal chamber, O Zion, and welcome Christ the King! Salute Mary, the heavenly gate, fashioned as the throne of the Cherubim! She carries the King of Glory! The Virgin is a cloud of light: she has borne in the flesh the Son begotten before the Morning Star. Simeon, taking Him in his arms, proclaimed to the peoples: “He is the Master of life and death; the Savior of the world!”
- Reader:** Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation!
- People:** The unwedded Mother has brought into the Temple Him Who shone forth before the ages from the Father. In these latter times He was born from a Virgin womb. He gave the Law on Mount Sinai, yet He makes Himself obedient to the commandment of the Law. She has brought Him to the Priest and righteous Elder whose appointed lot it was to see Christ the Lord. Simeon, receiving Him in his arms, rejoiced greatly and cried aloud: “This is God Who is co-eternal with the Father! He is the Redeemer of our souls!”
- Reader:** A Light to enlighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel.
- People:** The Theotokos Mary carried in her arms Him Who is borne aloft upon the chariot of the cherubim, and praised in song by the seraphim. The Giver of the Law, Who fulfills the commandment of the Law, was made flesh of the Unwedded Virgin. She gave Him into the arms of the Priest and Elder. Holding the Life, he asked to be released from life, saying: “Now, Master, let me depart to declare to Adam that I have seen the pre-eternal God and Savior of the world, Who was made a Babe without undergoing change!”
- Reader:** Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Tone 8 (for the Feast)

People: He Who is borne on high by the Cherubim and praised in hymns by the Seraphim is brought today according to the Law into the holy Temple and rests in the arms of the Elder as on a throne. From Joseph He receives gifts fitting for God: a pair of doves, a symbol of the spotless Church and of the newly chosen people of the Gentiles, and two young pigeons, for He is the originator of the two Covenants, both Old and New. Simeon, now granted the fulfillment of the prophecies concerning himself, blesses the Virgin and Theotokos Mary. He foretells in figures the Passion of her Son. From Him he begs release, crying aloud: "Now, Master, let me depart as Thou hast promised me, for I have seen the pre-eternal Light and the Lord and Savior of the people who bear the Name of Christ!"

Prayer of St. Symeon

People: Lord now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou has prepared before the face of all peoples: a light to enlighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel.

Reader: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. **(x3)**

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

O Most-Holy Trinity, have mercy on us; O Lord, blot out our sins; O Master, pardon our iniquities; O Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for Thy Name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. **(x3)**

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Our Father, Who art in the heavens, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us. Amen.

Troparia

Tone 1 (for the Feast)

People: Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, Full of Grace! From you shone the Sun of Righteousness, Christ our God, enlightening those who sat in darkness. Rejoice and be glad, O righteous Elder, you accepted in your arms the Redeemer of our souls, Who grants us the Resurrection!

Dismissal

People: Preserve, O God, the holy Orthodox faith, and Orthodox Christians unto ages of ages.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (*x3*)

O Christ, bless!

Reader: O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, Who deigned to be carried in the arms of righteous Simeon for our salvation, for the sake of the prayers of Thy most pure Mother, of our holy and God-bearing fathers, and all the saints, have mercy on us and save us, for Thou art good and the Lover of mankind.